

**MINUTES OF THE
WORKFORCE SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE**

July 21, 1999 -- 2:00 p.m.-- Room 414 State Capitol

Members Present:

Rep. Michael R. Styler, Chair
Sen. D. Edgar Allen
Sen. Parley G. Hellewell
Sen. Lorin V. Jones
Rep. Jeff Alexander
Rep. Sheryl L. Allen
Rep. Ron Bigelow
Rep. Jackie Biskupski
Rep. Ben C. Ferry
Rep. Lloyd W. Frandsen
Rep. Brent H. Goodfellow
Rep. Neil A. Hansen
Rep. Rebecca Lockhart
Rep. Gordon E. Snow
Rep. David L. Zolman

Members Absent:

Sen. Robert M. Muhlestein, Chair
Sen. Gene Davis

Staff Present:

Arthur L. Hunsaker,
Research Analyst
Keith M. Woodwell,
Associate General Counsel
Beverlee LeCheminant,
Legislative Secretary

Note: Names of others present and copies of information distributed at the meeting are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

1. Call to Order and Approval of June 16, 1999 Minutes -- Chair Styler called the meeting to order at 2:14 p.m.

MOTION: Rep. Bigelow moved to approve the minutes of June 16, 1999. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Report: MAP to Inclusive Child Care Project - Dr. Vera Frances Tait, M.D., MAP to Inclusive Child Care Project, distributed two handouts, each entitled, "MAP to Inclusive Child Care Project," and provided background on the organization. She cited estimates indicating that 300,000 Utah children are in some form of child care this year, and how difficult it is for those with special needs to get the care they need. Special needs include physical disabilities, asthma, diabetes, attention deficit disorder and other conditions. Utah is one of four states to receive the Federal Technical Assistance Planning Grant to help children with special needs gain access to child care.

Dr. Tait added that the goal of an inclusive child care program is to have children participate in the same routines and activities as children without disabilities. Ms. Tonia Gray, MAP to Inclusive Child Care Member and a parent of a disabled child, said the training to care for her child can be provided; the challenge is overcoming the initial fear and concern some potential child care providers express.

Susan Ord, project liaison, reported that during the past year the group has developed

program goals, designed a work plan, established the 8-hour "Special Care" awareness curriculum, and trained 75 people throughout the state. The training will continue. Dr. Tait concluded the presentation by stating that the establishment of community placement coordinators will be a key to the ultimate success of efforts to help children with special needs.

Rep. Zolman asked what was being done for special needs children prior to the existence of the program. Ms. Tait said assistance had to be arranged by the family without any resources or support. Ms. Ord said that much of the assistance special needs children need is not costly, but has more to do with attitudes toward caring for children with special needs. Rep. Hansen asked about the cost of caring for children with special needs. Ms. Ord clarified that the law does not allow higher rates to be charged for their care. Rep. Allen commended the job the group has done with very limited funding.

3. Report: The Charitable Sector and Welfare Reform - Laurie DiPadova, Deputy Director, Center for Public Policy and Administration, addressed the committee. She said the Center was approached by a prominent religious leader to conduct the study. She emphasized that the findings of the report are preliminary, intended for review and feedback from religious and charitable leaders throughout the state. Findings show that charitable leaders are noting a greatly increased pressure on charitable resources that is outstripping current levels of charitable support. There is concern for those in Utah who leave public assistance because no mechanism is currently in place to track their progress. Ms. DiPadova also cited research indicating the significant impact welfare systems have on the economy.

Rep. Zolman asked Ms. DiPadova whether she felt the 20% extension limit, designed to provide assistance to those with the greatest need past the three year assistance deadline, will be adequate. She said she is not certain because the exact criteria for determining who can continue to receive assistance is not finalized. She said she is more concerned about next summer's deadline than in the January, 2000 deadline, when the first welfare recipients reach the statutory cut off.

4. Current Status of Vocational Rehabilitation Study - Mr. Bob Gross, Director, Department of Workforce Services, distributed a handout entitled, "Current Status of the Vocational Rehabilitation Study" from which he made his presentation. He explained that the study was not funded and the deadline for its completion, Fiscal Year 1999, has now passed. Mr. Bill Greer, Fiscal Analyst, suggested options, including making the Executive Appropriations Committee aware of the problem.

MOTION: Rep. Sheryl Allen moved that a letter be sent to both the Executive Appropriations Committee and the Commerce and Revenue Appropriations Subcommittee making them aware of the need for the study and the lack of funding, and recognizing the value of cooperation among the agencies involved to resolve the issue. The motion passed unanimously with Reps. Bigelow and Biskupski absent for the vote.

Rep. Frandsen said the study should focus on concrete ways that such a transition could be framed and facilitated.

Rep. Goodfellow said he understands the federal government kept the Workforce Services and Vocational Rehabilitation functions separate, so perhaps the study is now unnecessary. Mr. Gross confirmed that there is no compelling push from the federal level, but much room has been left for local adjustments.

Blaine Peterson, Director, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, said the study would look at where people with disabilities would get the best service. Rep. Styler asked if both agencies could come up with \$25,000 each and do the study. Both Mr. Peterson and Mr. Gross indicated that it would have to come out of existing service funds. Rep. Frandsen added that the key, three years after the passage of the legislation requiring the study, is to frame the study in a way that will be of benefit now.

Terry Linn Pomeroy, citizen, suggested that a lot of data could be drawn from the California Institute.

5. Report: Department of Workforce Services - Two Years After Implementation - Mr. Gross distributed a handout entitled, "Evolution of the Department of Workforce Services: A History of Consolidation 1997 - 1999" from which he made his presentation. He traced the department's beginnings and its continued efforts to adapt services to meet the needs of public assistance clients. The department has worked hard to meld pieces of five different agencies. The move to a "one stop shop" model has significantly improved services to the public. He indicated the agency has lost, to date, 50 employees to another state agency and to local governments due to a perceived disparity in compensation. In addition, the internal survey of employees did not yield results as positive as they had hoped. He added that the department is being sued regarding the child care cash out program.

Sen. Jones expressed concern with the documented abuse of the cash out system.

Rep. Styler asked if the "one stop shop" model is covering client's needs, or are people still having to go to several places to receive needed services. Mr. Gross said the core welfare and job training services are provided by the department, but that specific vocational rehabilitation, human

services, and labor commission-related services must be received directly from those agencies. Rep. Styler asked if the department is effectively sharing information with the Labor Commission. Mr. Gross said his understanding is that they do, and would like to know if there is any indication to the contrary.

6. Committee Business - Mr. Hunsaker announced that the Legislative Management Committee approved a request by the committee chairs to study Drug Rehabilitation for Public Assistance Clients.

Rep. Styler asked for comparable salary information from the department. Mr. Gross said the department would provide that information.

7. Adjourn -

MOTION: Rep. Hansen moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with Reps. Biskupski, Alexander, Snow, and Zolman absent for the vote.